



LA PORTE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Connie Gramarossa
President

Richard Mrozinski
Vice President

Joe Haney
Member

Laporte County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes **Wednesday, May 3, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. County Complex Room 3 & via Zoom**

President Joe Haney called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m. followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance** led by **Ron Schafer**.

Roll Call

Auditor Tim Stabosz called the roll: **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** - Present; **President Joe Haney** - Present; **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** - Present. **Quorum present therefore meeting commenced.**

Consider Agenda

President Joe Haney asked was there any additions, solutions or corrections to the agenda. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** stated he had some additions to the agenda and they are as follows: Consideration of new officers for the Commission; Consider replacement of the county attorney with the new appointment; Consider changing Commission liaisons positions. **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa made a motion to accept to amend agenda. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa stated she wanted to motion to add items to agenda. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded motion. Motion carried 2-1. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa motioned to move items up to a, b, and c. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 2-1.**

Consider Approval of Minutes

President Haney suggested approval of the April 5, 2023 minutes. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consideration of Claims

Auditor Tim Stabosz stated Payroll ending 03/31/2023 in the amount of \$1,443,424.95 and ending 04/14/2023 in the amount of 1,457,806.60. Operating Expense Claims in the amount of \$4,755,785.41 and \$1,889,011.74. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Public Comment

Senator Bohecek gave a budget update which topped out \$44.5 billion. He said a couple of things with K-12 and book fees are no longer in effect and school of choice vouchers does not have any more restrictions. He also spoke on Medicaid and funding to non-profit hospitals. Mr. Bohecek spoke about a connections grant for La Porte County and other pertinent matters that he will supply a copy of bill and a summary to the Commission for further review.

Tim Short, Department of Marine Core League talked about toys for tots. He stated the toys had been collected and passed out to children in La Porte County and Indiana. Across the nation toys had been collected and passed out as well. He gave the Commission a copy of a certificate.

Lee Payne, Fish Lake asked questions about a Bike Trial. He wanted to know what is being done. **President Joe Haney** stated the county planner will speak later on this matter later in the meeting. Mr. Bane stated no one

in the area is in favor of the bike trial due to safety reasons and there not being enough room for transportation purposes as is.

Rick Kentaft, La Porte, he stated he was happy to see that Mr. Sabie is going to be the EMA Director. Also, he requested the Commission to cancel contract with Integritas and make the Interim HR Director the HR Director.

Rodney McCormick, Michigan City stated he wanted to know about what was going on with the HR Director position. He stated the public has the right to know what's going on with this. Talked about getting texts on his phone about Commissioner Gramarossa car accident. He stated it is sad that information is getting leaked out and this is slander. Mr. McCormick said it's pretty sad to see the stuff that is going on in the meeting today, it's and things need to change. He stated that Tim Stabosz was behind a lot of things going on and continue to bagger him and other people. He stated some appointed official of Michigan City drinking and driving makes the city look bad. It hurts to see things fall apart.

Department Head Comments

Attorney Andrew Jones heard there is a new appointment of a county attorney is going to take place and would like to thank the Commission and county for his position here. He hopes for the best for the Commission and La Porte County. He stated he would like everyone to pray for La Porte County.

Commissioner Connie Gramarossa stated the rumors and car accident has been a major issue. She read off a statement of facts that had occurred during the incident and after this incident. She read statements, and other comments that had been falsely made in regards to this incident on social media as well. Commissioner Connie Gramarossa also, had pictures and other documentation for review.

Tim Stabosz, Auditor Stated he wanted to defend his integrity and he knew nothing about the comments made on social media. He also, made statements in regards and toward **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa**.

Barb Houston, EMS Director thanked the Board of Commissioners for their support for the completion of the 911 Center.

Mitch Bishop, Planner commented on the Bike Trial in Fish Lake. He stated work and other processes in regards to this project is still in limbo at this time. Mitch said he plans to meet with pertinent parties in regards to getting the necessary information, agreements, etc. for the Bike Trail project.

Commissioner Rich Mrozinski stated he had a letter in regards to the cases and issues of emails and wanted to clear up some accusations and threats made toward the Board of Commissioners. He said **Commissioner Joe Haney** had received a letter from the office of the attorney general's office in regards to email requests from Sean Fagan.

Sean Fagan, Prosecutor made comments in regards to the amount of time wasted and taken up in the meeting regarding emails. He said the email issue is a pending litigation matter.

President Joe Haney stated he was going to side with the legislative officials and laws in regards to giving access to emails to the prosecutor's office. He went on to state that he had no knowledge of the car accident in regards to Commissioner Connie Gramarossa before/at the April 5, 2023 BOC meeting. Mr. Haney said he was not aware even though he voted for car accident claim to be paid upon attorneys' review and approval. He said he just naturally assumed.

Requests

Christine Ready, Michigan City stated she wanted to give a helpful suggestion for the La Porte County Animal Shelter and stated it was cost effective.

Old Business

None at this time

New Business

Consider new officers for the Commission. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** stated he would like to take this time to motion **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** to be elected President of the Commission to replace **Commissioner Joe Haney**. **Attorney Andrew Jones** stated first a vote needs to be taken to vacate the chair. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to vacate Chair of the President of the Commission. **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** seconded. **Commissioner Joe Haney** said he would consider this retaliation and **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** commented on him filing a report with the police department and how does he consider this retaliation. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated nay. Motion carried 2-1. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned that **Commissioner Connie Gramarossa** fill the open position of President of the Commission. **Commissioner Gramarossa** seconded. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated nay. Motion carried 2-1. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to fill the Vice President position with **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski**. **President Connie Gramarossa** seconded. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated nay. Motion carried 2-1.

Consider replacement of the county attorney with the new appointment. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to replace county attorney. **President Connie Gramarossa** seconded. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated nay. Motion carried 2-1. A discussion was taken place and an advertisement will be put out for a new county attorney and it was asked that **Attorney Andrews Jones** stay on to represent county for approximately two weeks. **Attorney Andrew Jones** stated that he would and asked about payment of his bills. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned that attorney Jones stay on until replacement. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Consider changing Commission liaisons positions. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to replace **Commissioner Joe Haney** on the RDC, Museum, and Animal Boards effective immediately. **President Connie Gramarossa** seconded motion. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated nay. Motion carried 2-1. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to replace **President Connie Gramarossa** on the Fair Board. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned **President Connie Gramarossa** to replace **Commissioner Joe Haney** on the FEMC and Health Board. **President Connie Gramarossa** seconded. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated nay. Motion carried 2-1.

Consider approval Loves Travel Center PUD. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** stated this has been a long time coming and wished to see this take place. **Commissioner Joe Haney** stated he agreed also. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Consider proposed rate increase - Andrew McGuire, EMS. Mr. McGuire stated he had given Attorney Andrew Jones and Commissioner Joe Haney a breakdown of the costs. Attorney Jones stated it met his approval. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Consider EMS Week Proclamation - Andrew McGuire, EMS. Emergency Medical Services Week will be held May 21, 2023 thru May 27, 2023. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Consider permission to approach Council for budget shortages - Andrew McGuire, EMS. Mr. McGuire asked permission to approach the Council for budget shortages. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** motioned to approve. **Commissioner Joe Haney** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Consider trade in of water craft for new watercraft, Sherrif Heeg. Their office is looking to trade in old boat and wanted approval from Commission to purchase a new boat. He stated there will be no cost to the county taxpayers. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider Tiger/Homewav commissary and communication proposal – John Wilcher, Community Corrections. Mr. Wilcher asked Commission for approval to approach Council for funding. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider Lexipol proposal – John Wilcher, Community Corrections. Mr. Wilcher stated there hasn't been a new policy and procedure manual for a while at Community Corrections. He stated they were wanting to upgrade it. They are in progress of writing a proposal. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider request permission to approach County Council to spend misdemeanor funds for new washers and dryers - John Wilcher, Community Corrections. Mr. Wilcher stated this has been already taken care of by the county Council and they had been given permission to order new washer and dryers. The Commission approved Mr. Wilcher/Community Corrections to approach the Council for purchase. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider request of out of state travel for Barb Stooksbury to attend National Association of Drug Court Professions Conference in Houston, TX June 23 thru June 27, 2023 – Sean Fagan, Prosecuting Attorney. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider La Porte County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan resolution – Rob Sabie, EMA. Mr. Sabie stated this is their mitigation plan and it needs to be approved. Attorney Jones reviewed contract and it meets his approval. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider request to move Long Beach warning siren and request Council for funding - Rob Sabie, EMA. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve request. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider EMA Advisory Board recommendation of Robert Sabie for EMA Director – Joe Haney, Commissioner. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider agreement between NIPSCO and LPC regarding frost law permits and road repair costs – Andrew Jones, Attorney. Attorney Jones stated this is still being negotiated. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to table. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider secondary approval of Wagner Estate II Plat - Nathan Flickner, Wightman. Commissioner Joe Haney stated there was a contingent approval and he has not heard back from anyone at this time. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to table. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider support for La Porte Courthouse Candlelight Tour that takes place in December – Heather Stevens, Clerk. This will be held two weekends in December 2023. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider School Board Ex-Officio appointment to Redevelopment Commission, Rhonda Spence. Commissioner Joe Haney stated the Commission had received this recommendation from the school board. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider Board of Commissioners School Board appointment, Bonnie Snider. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider permission to approach Council to request an additional appropriation from LRS (1169) for road maintenance (paving, chip seal, etc.) not to exceed \$2.5 million – Allen Stevens, Highway Department. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned this is contingent based on Board of Commissioners' review of list. Commissioner Rich Mrozinski seconded. Motioned carried 3-0.**

Consider Property and Liability Insurance Renewals – John Jones, Michiana Insurance. Mr. Jones stated that our renewal is coming up May 27, 2023. He met on last week with La Porte County RDC who had reviewed the quotes for railroad liability insurance. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to approve. President Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider Employee Wellness Days Screening – Monique Thomas, Human Resources. This will be held May 15, 2023 thru May 17, 2023. Commissioner Joe Haney stated he's hoping next year that this could be done through our clinic with no additional costs for screenings. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider renewal of catastrophic stop loss health policy – East Isles. **Tim Stabosz** stated he received renewal contract and that the county has been working with East Isles over the years. Attorney Andrew Jones stated he reviewed the contract and it meets his approval. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider INDOT Bridge Inspection LPA contract – Jerry Sullivan, County Engineer. Mr. Sullivan stated he was here for the Commissioners' consideration. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to approve. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.**

Consider receive/consider submissions of RFQ for Courthouse Engineering submissions. **Attorney Andrew Jones** stated RFQs had been sent out and now it's presented for the Board of Commissioners approval. **Commissioner Rich Mrozinski** stated he don't see the need to spend a lot of money on this now and said he was not going to vote for this. **Commissioner Joe Haney** said he had received two submissions and a copy of a previous contract upon taking office. He had some concerns and doesn't believe we have the monies for this right now. **Commissioner Joe Haney** also, stated we do have to do something about the water in the Courthouse in Michigan City. **Commissioner Joe Haney motioned to go before Council to discuss. Motion dies for lack of second.**

Adjournment

Commissioner Rich Mrozinski motioned to adjourn at 12:22 p.m. Commissioner Joe Haney seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

EXAMINED AND APPROVED BY THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
COUNTY OF LA PORTE, INDIANA
DATE: _____

ATTEST: _____
LA PORTE COUNTY, INDIANA